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SUBJECT: REPORT ON BFIF-FUNDED REGIONAL COMMERCIAL TRAINING

REF: A) STATE 8040, B) 2008 STATE 108959

SUMMARY

1. (U) AmEmbassy Addis Ababa's Commercial Specialist (CommSpec) attended the joint State-Commerce Regional Training and Strategic Planning Program in Johannesburg, South Africa in February 2009. CommSpec appreciated the opportunity to network with colleagues from across the continent. A trip highlight included CommSpec's presentation to U.S.-based firms on "Doing Business in Ethiopia" and meeting one-on-one with U.S. company representatives. Post expended a total of USD 1,725.85 from the FY09 Business Facilitation Incentive Fund (BFIF) for this training program. End Summary.

PROGRAM OUTCOME

2. (U) Thanks to the Business Facilitation Incentive Fund (BFIF), AmEmbassy Addis Ababa's Commercial Specialist (CommSpec) was able to participate in the joint State-Commercial Service Regional Training and Strategic Planning Program held at the Ronald H. Brown Commercial Center in Johannesburg, South Africa from February 17 - 20, 2009. CommSpec benefitted from the opportunity to network with colleagues from 30 other countries across the continent. Participants were able to share information regarding commercial success stories as well as challenges in commercial work.

3. (U) CommSpec appreciated the opportunity to learn more about commercial diplomacy, Africa-specific commercial programs, and a variety of U.S. government agencies--including Agriculture, Trade and Development Agency, Millennium Challenge Corporation, Export-Import Bank, Overseas Private Insurance Corporation, and the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative--via video conference exchanges. CommSpec was even able to put commercial work into action by giving a presentation on "Doing Business in Ethiopia" to a group of U.S.-based firms. This presentation was a trip highlight as well as the one-to-one meetings conducted with U.S. firms such as GE, Donaldson, Lindsay Corporation, Ecolab, and Intel.

FINANCIAL EXPENDITURES

4. (U) The total expenses CommSpec incurred for air travel, per diem, taxis, and the entry visa to attend the Regional Commercial Training were as follows:

Air Travel	= USD 1,153.00
M&IE	= USD 427.50
Local Transportation	= USD 92.32
Entry Visa to S. Africa	= USD 53.03

Total actual expenditure = USD 1,725.85

5. (U) Post appreciates the Department's continued BFIF support of commercial advocacy and training.

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